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THE LIGHT INFANTRY DIVISION:
A CASE FOR GREATER ROBUSTNESS
IN A DOWNSIZED ARMY

BY

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THE LIGHT INFANTRY DIVISION:
A CASE FOR GREATER ROBUSTNESS IN A DOWNSIZED ARMY

AN INDIVIDUAL STUDY PROJECT

by

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In 1984 a decision was made to create the Light Infantry Division (LID). This decision sparked controversy throughout the Army and raised issues that remain unresolved today. The primary concerns that were raised centered on the LID's shortcomings in lethality and sustainability. This study project is a review of current LID limitations as seen by past and present Light Infantry Division commanders. Their perspectives were taken from Division Command Lessons Learned Program pamphlets, Combat Training Centers (CTC) Lessons Learned, and a detailed interview on this subject with a serving Light Infantry Division Commanding General, MG Steven L. Arnold. The recommendations and conclusions do not represent a consensus from the light infantry community, but are the summarized views of LID commanders. The general view is that the shortcomings of the LID must be corrected -- the LID must become more robust in the 1990's in order to meet the Army requirement for "versatility, deployability, lethality, and expansibility." If it cannot meet this criteria, the LID risks being viewed as irrelevant and expendable in a budget constrained, downsized Army.

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INTRODUCTION

General

In his 16 April 1984 White Paper, General John A. Wickham, Jr., Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, announced the creation of the new Light Infantry Division (LID) by stating, "This timely decision is based on threat analysis, recent historic lessons learned, and resource constraints."¹ He went on to say that this new organization would add a new dimension to the Army's strategic mobility by providing highly responsive units that are offensively-oriented and can fight across the spectrum of conflict, especially in low intensity conflict.² This high level decision to create Light Infantry Divisions sparked controversy throughout the Army. The primary concerns centered on the LID's lethality and sustainability.

Over the past decade these concerns have not been adequately resolved. A review of the literature from Division Commander's Lessons Learned, as well as Lessons Learned documents from the Combat Training Centers (CTC), generally highlight these same shortcomings in today's LID. It can be argued that the LID's current MTOE is inadequate to support General Vuono's 1991 requirement for "versatility, deployability, lethality and expansibility."³ If this is true, can fixes be made in light of current budgetary and resource constraints?

Budgetary reductions are a fact of life for the Army into the foreseeable future. The 12 division Base Force articulated in 1992 by General Colin Powell, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, is

clearly in jeopardy during the Clinton Administration. General Powell and General Gordon Sullivan, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army, have both stated that the Army will continue to have a mixed force structure of heavy, airborne, air assault, and light units.

Assuming that this mixed force will exist after reducing the Base Force from 12 divisions to perhaps seven to nine divisions, can or should the LID continue to reflect its originally conceived MTOE?

The answer to the above is driven by capabilities. In a much smaller Army, force structure capabilities must be optimized within resource constraints. LID commanders since 1984 appear to agree universally that LIDs add a vital capability to the Army's force mix; however, most argue that its lethality and sustainability ought to be enhanced. In view of today's changed international environment and national budgetary constraints, one might further argue that our Army cannot afford to keep in its force structure any organization that is not capable of meeting all of General Vuono's key criteria for crisis response.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to summarize the views of past and present LID commanders with regard to their perceived shortcomings of Light Infantry Divisions (LID) and, based on their views, provide key recommendations for a more robust LID in our downsized Army of the 1990's. The recommendations are presented generally within the framework of the seven Battlefield Operating Systems (BOS), but also address intangibles such as leadership and training.

Methodology

The recommendations are a synthesis of lessons learned from the Division Command Lessons Learned Program in published pamphlets for designated Division Commanders entitled Experience in Division Command and lessons learned from the National Training Center (NTC), the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), and the Battle Command Training Program (BCTP). The primary source is experience as a division G3 with Major General Steven L. Arnold at the above Combat Training Centers (CTC) and a day long interview with MG Arnold on 20 October 1992 dedicated to this topic. Although I alone am responsible for the recommendations, generally speaking they have been made by others at other times and in other forums. My method has been to consolidate them and to provide a succinct rationale for them.

DIVISION COMMAND EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED

THE INFANTRYMAN CONTINUES TO BE THE ULTIMATE WEAPON OF WAR. WE WILL DEFEND THE WESTERN WORLD IF WE HAVE THE INFANTRYMEN WHO REFUSE TO LOSE IT. WE WILL WIN THE NEXT WAR AND THE ONE AFTER THAT IF WE REMEMBER WHAT HISTORY TEACHES US ABOUT PUTTING MEN ON THE GROUND TO CONTROL IT.⁶

GEN FRED KROESCH, 1980

General Wickham's decision to create light infantry divisions is well supported by history. People are prone to forget that most of the divisions involved in the greatest battles of World War II were light infantry. During the breakout from Normandy, allied forces had a total of only six armored divisions among the three participating armies. In the East, Guderian's entire Panzer group of 19 divisions included only five Panzer divisions during

the war's greatest battle of encirclement east of Kiev. In that battle, Guderian advanced 245 miles in only three weeks and contributed to the capture of the Ukraine and, with it, over 665,000 Russians.

At the same time these great battles were raging on the Eastern Front, General Lesley J. McNair, General Headquarters (GHQ), Army Ground Forces, U.S. Army, was establishing and training light infantry forces in the United States. The LIDs received considerable support because their strategic mobility requirements were much less than heavier divisions. But it was recognized that their firepower and sustainability required augmentation.⁵ Three LIDs were formed in June 1943 and evaluated by III Corps. The formal assessments reconfirmed the anticipated shortcomings: lethality, mobility, and sustainability. Consequently, recommendations were carried out to reconfigure the LIDs as standard infantry divisions.⁶

It was not a viable option in 1984 to add to the force structure standard infantry divisions vice LIDs. The LID decision was driven primarily by a military strategy based on a capability to deter aggression before it reached an escalatory phase - crisis response. The U.S. military faced a severe strategic lift constraint, approximately 260 C-141B's and 77 C-5A/B's, that precluded rapidly deploying significant forces. The solution appeared to be to configure a combat force that is rapidly deployable: the LID. The LID provided the National Command Authority the capability to put forces on the ground in a short

period of time. The importance of this was noted by COL Peter J. Boylan:

...early response, before issues have surfaced and positions hardened, is likely to have a singular inhibiting effect upon the potential adversary and may tend to paralyze his initiative and restrict or narrow his counteroptions...It does, however, require a high level of strategic mobility.⁷

While strategic mobility was a strong advantage of the LID, today, most LID commanders think that the current LID model is inadequate and unaffordable for our smaller Army. This is especially true in light of GEN Gordon Sullivan's commitment to maintaining capability with the slogan "No More Task Force Smiths." As the Army reshapes to emphasize deployability, lethality, versatility, and expansibility -- it must optimize the capability of its LID or abandon the LID. The question is how to provide enough capability within other limits.

Increased LID capability translates into a more robust division. LID commanders generally agree that the paradigm of a 10,000 soldier division capable of deploying on 500 aircraft sorties must be broken. First, strategic lift capability is beginning to change with the aging of the C-141B fleet and the coming of the C-17. And secondly, and more importantly, division commanders want more flexibility. They are paid to analyze situations and to tailor their forces accordingly. They argue that they should be given the mission and, following their METT-T (Mission, Enemy, Terrain, Troops Available, and Time) analysis, be

allowed to determine the proper force mix. And they will do it within whatever constraints, strategic or otherwise, articulated by the National Command Authority (NCA).

Light infantry purists may contend that adding more equipment and weapons systems to the LID will dilute the spirit of the light infantryman. There is an element of truth in the spirit of the light infantryman, a mind set that parallels Stonewall Jackson's foot cavalry mentality. It is an esprit that keeps a soldier light -- thinking in terms of what is in his rucksack and not in terms of what is in his combat trains. It is manpower intensive, offensively-oriented, and expert at the lowest levels of leadership -- squad and platoon. But creation of a more robust LID does not automatically portend elimination of this light infantry mentality. LID commanders should be charged with retaining and reinforcing their unit's esprit. This is a leadership issue, not a force structure issue.

The force structure of the LID should be capabilities focused, designed with a robustness that enhances warfighting without sacrificing the spirit of the light infantry. One approach is to look at our current doctrine and to determine what it is that light divisions do best and what it is that they need help in. The LID's identified shortcomings are in lethality, sustainability, and tactical mobility. They can be addressed in terms of the seven Battlefield Operating Systems (BOS).

Fire Support

Light Infantry Division commanders recognize that doctrinally their organizations need help in the deep fight. In terms of fire support the biggest shortfall is in artillery. Organically they have three 105mm howitzer battalions and a single battery of 155mm. The single 155mm battery is difficult to train and to command and control. What is recommended is a general support (GS) artillery battalion. This would be a composite battalion that would include the command and control element for two 155mm batteries and a lightweight Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS) battery. Not only would it result in greater fire for effect, but its headquarters element could provide fire support planning for reinforcing the direct support (DS) artillery battalions and could be employed in the counterfire fight. Also included would be the full sweep of munitions inherent to support the 155mm howitzer.⁸

Intelligence

The lethality issue should not be viewed solely in terms of fire support systems. In the deep fight the commander must be able to see the battlefield to make his long range fire support systems effective. LID commanders need the capability to fight the smart deep fight if they want to influence the close fight of their brigades. To do this they need to employ Named Areas of Interest (NAI) and Target Areas of Interest (TAI) advantageously. Doing so requires intel gathering systems. Today their organic intel systems are limited, beginning with the cavalry squadron and the Long Range Surveillance Detachment (LRSD).

Commanders advocate as a first step, the reduction of the multitude of aircraft in their aviation brigade. Their most immediate concern is the Cav squadron. If authorized, they would eliminate the Cav's AH-1 Cobra in favor of an AH-58D, an armed Kiowa.⁹ It would be used primarily as an intelligence gathering platform, but could also be employed to conduct armed reconnaissance. This same aircraft could also replace the Cobra in the LID aviation attack battalion. This solution would streamline logistics requirements and enhance strategic mobility when deploying these aircraft by USAF aircraft.

The Cav squadron also needs additional ground troops. Today's single ground troop is clearly inadequate to screen a division's flank. MG Arnold put it in terms of a LID's inability to screen its flank at 0200 hours in a rain storm. Aviation is grounded and the screen is reduced to an austere ground troop spread out in a few locations.

Next, the LRSD is too thin with only four teams.¹⁰ At least six are required. This number provides the capability of employing four teams simultaneously on NAIs while the remaining two teams rest or prepare for future operations. The LRSD also needs better long range communications equipment with burst transmission capability. Ideally, this equipment should be small, lightweight, and capable of making hard copy.

In addition to human intelligence (HUMINT) systems shortfalls, commanders believe that the LID organization is not robust enough overall in the intel field. This shortcoming adversely affects their ability to see the battlefield and bring

effective fire to bear on the enemy. Recognizing that limited resources may preclude increases in personnel and equipment, one course of action is to develop the ability to downlink national and theater intel systems into the division tactical operations center (DIOC). The technology currently exists; the problem appears to be with the mentality of compartmentalized information. That can be changed.

If the intel downlinks were made into the DIOC, the analysis capability would need to expand. Lessons learned from a number of Battle Command Training Programs (BCTP) identify a recurring weakness within all divisions to analyze the flood of intelligence reports. The information must be analyzed by the division commander and his G2 and G3. Beyond that, little depth exists: The two assistant division commanders are normally involved elsewhere -- one fights the close battle at the Division Tactical Command Post (DTAC CP) and the other one fights the rear battle at the Division Rear Command Post (DREAR CP). The chief of staff is overall in control of the Division Main Command Post (DMAIN CP) and may or may not be available to add his expertise to the analysis of the intelligence reports. The G2's assistants are few and most have limited experience. So even if perfect intelligence reports were forthcoming from the Cav squadron and the LRSD, they may be of precious little value when analyzed by an inexperienced enlisted man (usually a Specialist E-4). This lack of depth and experience argues for adding trained warrant officers and noncommissioned officers to the G2 staff.

A final point MG Arnold made about seeing the battlefield related to his experience as the G3, Third Army, in Desert Shield/Desert Storm. During the Gulf War VII Army Corps flew an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV), the Pioneer, and employed it with their Corps artillery for targetting. UAVs were successful, but their utility was not maximized. To optimize their capabilities, Arnold argues that LIDs and other divisions ought to own UAVs. They would be operated and maintained by the division's MI battalion. They would be used as recon platforms to provide target information, as well as to call for fire. This would optimize the UAVs utility and would greatly enhance a LID commander's ability to see and fight deep.

Command and Control

LID commanders generally agree that from a divisional standpoint, command and control (C2) is about right. The key enhancement would be redundancy. The doctrine is right: the DTAC fights the close battle and the DREAR fights the rear. The DMAIN orchestrates the deep operations and conducts future planning. But the LID MTOE for command post personnel is too austere. There simply are not enough people to maintain simultaneous operations for any length of time. Every LID (as well as every other type division) that participates in BCTP augments their division staff. That is because these battle simulations replicate war and there are no breaks. Operations run 24 hours a day and a commander's subordinates must monitor the battlefield continuously. C2 is a

critical, yet often unquantifiable ingredient when addressing lethality -- seeing the battlefield and bringing fires to bear.

One means to enhance C2 within the LID is through computers. LID commanders are not convinced that the Army has really capitalized on the strengths of computers. This technology is an immense combat multiplier.¹¹ The general feeling is that the Army is focused on the hardware and is insistent on centralizing it. The outcome is that the hardware is practically outdated by the time it has been standardized and fielded.

One approach would be to standardize the language, not the machinery. Allow divisions to buy off-the-shelf computers and replace them every five years or so as technology advances. Until then units will never be able to integrate to an optimal level. Commanders want a capability to disseminate orders, graphics, and intelligence rapidly. Then as they see the battlefield they can share it with their subordinate commanders quickly and take decisive action to defeat the enemy. Again, said differently, bring lethal fires to bear in a timely manner.

Maneuver

LID commanders describe the soul of the light infantry division as MOS 11B -- the infantryman. Without exception commanders support General Wickham's premise of "soldier power." It is the synergistic combination of concerned, competent leaders and well trained soldiers that makes light infantry forces uniquely effective.¹² A young infantryman sees himself as being able to do anything, to make anything happen that his leaders tell him to do. It is this confidence that must be nurtured and

sustained. It is not new to our Army nor to other armies. Rommel, in his book Attacks, suggests over and over that his principles of maneuver warfare were really founded in his experiences in the light infantry during World War I.¹³ So the maneuver force, the squad and platoon, is a success story. Keep it and refine it only around the margin.

The margin is defined by LID commanders as the organic weapons systems of the infantryman. Discussions generally center on machineguns and antiarmor weapon systems. Many LID commanders like the old M60 machinegun, especially when employed with its tripod in the defense or from a support position in an attack. But a decision has already been reached within the infantry community to replace the M60 with the M49 Semi-automatic Weapon (SAW). This weapon has already been fielded in all the LIDs.

The LID weakness in antiarmor weapons was identified in 1984 and has yet to be rectified. An infantry battalion in a LID has only four TOW and eighteen Dragon systems. Most Third World nations have tanks and armored personnel carriers. The Soviet BTR-60 was encountered by the Rangers in Grenada. There's no reason to suspect that future combat zones will be any different. Antiarmor systems must be improved.

Improvements or replacements for current antiarmor systems have been under scrutiny by the Infantry School at Ft. Benning for years. In 1986 then-MG Burba stated, "Replacing the Dragon has been our (infantry's) first priority because it allows the infantry to conduct its roles on the battlefield whether it is light infantry or heavy."¹⁴ A replacement for the Dragon, the

Advanced Antitank Weapon System - Medium (AAWS-M), has yet to be fielded almost a decade later. It is a shortcoming that must be fixed.

Air Defense Artillery

LID commanders are relatively happy with the air defense battalion. It is composed of two batteries with a total of 18 towed 20mm Vulcans. These systems are of limited utility and discussions have occurred as to replacing them with the Avenger. No formal proposals have been made and no commander regards it as a critical issue. On the other hand, the Stinger weapon system is held in high regard and appears to be the weapon of choice well into the future.

Mobility/Counter mobility/Survivability

The engineers are regarded as an essential element of the LID, not just the structure and equipment, but the mentality. Called "Sappers," they are part of the heart and soul of the offensive-oriented division. Commanders think that the engineers have been kept on a shoestring primarily owing to the 10,000-soldier cap on the division. The companies are too small; they have only two platoons each. Consequently, an engineer company in direct support of an infantry brigade has only two platoons to support three infantry battalions. Further, they have limited digging capability -- no bulldozer, just the small emplacement excavator (SEE) -- and very little haul capability for Class IV barrier material. The capability to dig in quickly a force of any

size is often a bridge too far for the engineers. This is an area that commanders agree needs more study to find the right answer.¹⁵

Combat Service Support

LID commanders agree that light divisions were built on the margin in the combat service support (CSS) area.¹⁶ It was done not by requirements or by functional necessity, but done by elimination. In essence, it was stated that the LID would have 10,000 soldiers, then force structure analysts had to determine what the CSS piece could afford to look like. As a result the LID lacks CSS robustness, and has severe problems in tactical mobility and sustainability.

The infantry battalion has 35 vehicles (HMMWV) specifically to support TOW teams, command and control, and ambulances. There is no organic transportation to move infantry soldiers around the battlefield -- not a problem in and of itself, except that there is no relief within the division. If you consolidate the 5-ton trucks within the division support command (DISCOM), only one of the nine infantry battalions can be lifted at a time. And this mobility is at the expense of resupply missions for the remainder of the division. The aviation brigade can provide some help; but it has only two lift companies of 15 UH-60 Blackhawks each. Combine these two companies and only the assault element of an infantry battalion can be lifted. This can be increased if the seats are taken out and the aircraft load (ACL) is increased to 20 soldiers. In the Gulf War XVIII Airborne Corps did this; VII Corps refused to do so in view of safety considerations.

This lack of tactical mobility degrades the flexibility and versatility of the LID. A fluid battlefield requires that the LID commander be able to move and reposition his forces quickly to respond to contingencies and opportunities. Today that capability must be provided by the Corps, often in the form of CH-47 Chinooks. The problem here is twofold: competing demands on these resources within the Corps and the questionable availability of these resources in the future. As the Army shrinks will assets within the Corps shrink?

The LID's inadequate lift capability is highlighted each and every time a LID participates in a training rotation at the National Training Center (NTC). Invariably LID battalions are augmented with a truck platoon of about 20 vehicles. Seldom are these trucks used for tactical missions; generally they are employed in resupply efforts of Classes I (food and water), III (Petroleum, Oil, and Lubricants - POL), IV (barrier material), and V (ammunition). So usually, they are unavailable to help solve another significant LID problem, soldier load.

Light infantry soldiers at NTC routinely carry rucksacks in excess of 100 pounds. It's a necessity. The harsh desert environment requires enormous amounts of water per soldier. Coupled with ammunition, weapons, and food -- the loads are heavy and burdensome. No dedicated logistics system exists that has yet convinced the light infantryman that his needs will be taken care of. LID commanders have conducted a variety of tests, to include the use of all terrain vehicles (ATV), to bring soldiers' rucksacks forward. But no test has produced a consensus on an

approved solution, if such a solution exists. Consequently, the only transportation the light infantryman can depend upon into the foreseeable future is his boots.

The lack of transportation also has a devastating impact on medical evacuation. The vast expanses of the desert, as well as the vulnerability of aircraft and vehicles to long range fire, make the prospect of evacuating an injured or wounded soldier dicey. The matter is vastly complicated when the evacuation assets are not organic, but must come from a sister unit or the Corps. This condition reduces the confidence that the soldier has in his support systems.

RELATED LESSONS LEARNED

As the Total Army begins to reshape itself during the next decade, the proper mix of active, reserve, and National Guard units must be considered. Light infantry units currently exist in all of these organizations. What is the right mix for the future?

The Active Component (AC) shares a consensus that reserve and National Guard light infantry units cannot train for 39 days a year and be as proficient as their AC counterparts. It's an impossibility. Upon mobilization these units could expect 90-120 days training before being deployed, yet many light infantry purists contend that there is more to the equation than training to reach sufficient levels of combat readiness.

The key to the equation in the combat effectiveness of light infantry units is leadership. The leadership at the top sets the

tone of light infantry training programs and develops the tactical style that characterizes units during actual operations. The leaders typically are innovative, imaginative, flexible, and tough-minded. They endure the same hardships as their men, and they are equally physically fit and self-reliant. The confidence, trust, and closeness between the leaders and those led in light infantry units normally exceed those traits as experienced in regular infantry units.¹⁷ These traits cannot be developed to the same levels in leaders that have more limited opportunities to train together with their subordinates; nor can commensurate unit cohesion be expected to develop.

First, most reserve and Guard light infantry units cannot fill their 11B infantrymen positions during peacetime. Normally they have between fifty and sixty percent of the authorized slots filled. Recognizing that 11B's are the 'heart and soul' of the light infantry, the problem is clear to the casual observer. During mobilization personnel can be provided to fill the 11B shortages. But a 90 to 120 day post-mobilization training period appears to be insufficient to create the critical intangibles of confidence, trust, and closeness between leaders and led that are inherent in combat ready light units.

The second major problem is the experience level of reserve and Guard leaders. It becomes increasingly difficult at the higher levels for reserve components to assume the same mission as active forces. In other words, at platoon level there is a difference between an active duty and a reserve component platoon leader. But the difference is not great. The formal schooling

has been the same, and generally the peacetime experiences have been similar. But as the experience grows over the life of a career, the differences grow also.

Consider the difference at the division command level. The LID commanding general has 30+ years of experience on active duty. It should be expected that he knows his business and can give sage advice.¹⁸ It is the sum total of all of his experiences that goes into his decision making process -- his synchronization of the battlefield; his ability to see the close, rear, and deep operations simultaneously; and his ability to orchestrate all the seven Battlefield Operating Systems (BOS) to maximize his division's lethality in the defeat of the enemy. The reserve component LID commander simply doesn't have comparable day-to-day, year-round experiences on which to draw.

In today's environment the solution appears to be to provide senior reserve component commanders with as many training experiences as possible, such as BCTP.¹⁹ Another option would be to replace these commanders -- a politically explosive and unproductive solution in the long run for the active duty Army. The right answer cannot be found until a larger issue is settled -- the role of the reserve components in the 1990's and beyond.

In 1973 the Army strategy was to deploy RC units early into combat with their parent units. This was the beginning of the Total Force Policy which placed strong emphasis on the roundout, capstone and affiliation concepts. The policy was not implemented in 1989 for Operation Just Cause, nor in August 1990 for Operation Desert Shield/Desert Storm. (The 48th Brigade, Georgia ARNG did

not follow the 24th Division (Mechanized) to Saudi Arabia; they were replaced by an active Army unit, the 197th Separate Infantry Brigade, Ft. Benning, Georgia.) These facts remain irritants and impact on the RC's perception of the new military strategy announced by President Bush in August 1990.

The focus of the new strategy is on regional conflict, not global war. The Army established the criteria: "fully-trained, highly ready forces that are rapidly deliverable." As a direct consequence, missions that require intensive training, highly technical or unique military skills, high peacetime operating tempos, and no warning or very short notice response time, necessitate that these units be drawn primarily from the active force structure. The role for the RC appears to be a traditional one of providing individual fillers, support and reinforcing units, and expansion capability.²⁰

The issue for the light infantry community is one of the proper AC/RC mix. On the one hand, a strong case can be made that part time soldiers can never develop the uniqueness associated with the light infantry. Beyond regular infantry skills, light infantrymen are distinguished by their attitude of self-reliance, their mastery of the environment, their versatility, and their high esprit.²¹ If that's true, where should reserve soldiers serve?

One school of thought is that the reserve components serve best in single function types of units that are easy to train and that often parallel civilian skills. This includes medical, maintenance, and supply and services units. But assigning reserve

components solely to combat support (CS) and combat service support (CSS) units doesn't make sense from a national standpoint. During the Gulf War the support of the military and the national will was due in large measure to the fact that reserve component soldiers from all across America were serving in every branch of service. That commitment from the people was critical. The Army cannot ignore that commitment without the risk of isolating itself from the people in the future.

Hence, a dilemma. Not can, but should reserve components serve in light infantry? This factor compounds the concerns cited in the beginning of this paper -- the inherent weaknesses found in today's LID: lethality and sustainability. In addressing these weaknesses, senior Army leaders must not overlook the impact of reserve components on the light infantry community. The elimination of RC light infantry units from future combat operations is simply not a viable option.

Army senior leaders must continue to integrate RC combat units throughout the Total Force. If shortcomings in RC light infantry divisions do exist at the higher echelons, then address the problems and fix them. Do not write off entire units. The Marines have found a way to integrate successfully their RC combat units with their active parent units. It's done at battalion level and lower.²² Perhaps that's a good starting point for the active Army to begin its analysis on how to make its Total Force Policy workable. The Army must avoid exacerbating traditional rivalries between the components, find a common ground and begin

to cement these critical relationships. The security of our nation demands nothing less.

CONCLUSIONS

It is clear that the resources of our Army, personnel and budgets face severe constraints into the foreseeable future. Both our military and political leaders have stated that forces will be smaller, lighter, faster and more lethal so they can reach a world trouble spot in a hurry and have enough punch to influence the outcome of events there.²³ Fewer forces will allow a much smaller margin of error to compensate for any strategic miscalculations or oversights and imply the acceptance of greater national risk.

In addressing this risk, the Army must adhere to GEN Vuono's call to have forces that meet the criteria of versatility, deployability, lethality, and expansibility. This requires an effort to fix the identified weaknesses of the light infantry force while preserving its inherent strengths. Some of those fixes have been suggested in this paper -- fixes supported by former LID commanders.

The recommendations are not inclusive, but have focused on considerations that impact on the most prominent LID weaknesses: lethality and sustainability. Further, an effort has been made to recognize that consideration must be given to more than just equipment and weapons systems. It must be given to the the soldier -- the heart of the light infantry. Intangible factors such as leadership and training also have an impact on lethality

and sustainability, and must be considered in any equation that alters the current LID.

Light infantry forces have proven their utility historically and in today's combat training centers. The key, however, is recognition of their limitations. They are not general-purpose forces. They have a variety of vulnerabilities. Finally, they always require considerable augmentation in prolonged campaigns, in open terrain, in the defense, and when facing a heavy force. Some of these limitations can be rectified, giving the light infantry greater capability and utility across the continuum of military operations.

In the national interest the Army should listen and act on the recommendations of its light infantry division commanders: Increase the LID capability, and when assigning a mission to the LID, depend on the experience of the LID commander to tailor the force to accomplish the mission.

ENDNOTES

¹Department of Defense, Department of the Army, White Paper 1984: Light Infantry Divisions, by GEN John A. Wickham, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 16 April 1984), i.

²Ibid., 1.

³Carl E. Vuono, "Desert Storm and the Future of Conventional Forces," Foreign Affairs 70 (Spring 1991): 58.

⁴Speech by GEN Frederick Kroesen, CINC/USAREUR, in Frankfurt, West Germany, 25 March 1980, transcript provided by BG Larry G. Lehowicz, Assistant Division Commander-Operations, 10th Mountain Division (Light), Ft. Drum, N.Y.

⁵Kent R. Greenfield, Robert R. Palmer and Bell I. Wiley, United States Army in World War II: The Army Ground Forces: The Organization of Ground Combat Troops, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office), 343.

⁶Ibid., 347-348.

⁷Peter J. Boylan, "Power Projection, Risk and the Light Force," Military Review (May 1982): 64.

⁸Experiences in Division Command. 1991, 23-25.

⁹Ibid., 28.

¹⁰Ibid., 24.

¹¹Ibid., 15.

¹²Wickham, White Paper 1984, 2.

¹³Erwin Rommel, Attacks, (Vienna, VA: Athena Press, 1979), v-vi.

¹⁴E. H. Burba, "Commandant's Notes," Infantry (Sep-Oct 86): 2.

¹⁵Experiences in Division Command. 1991, 29.

¹⁶Experiences in Division Command. 1989, 30.

¹⁷Scott R. McMichael, "The Nature of Light Infantry," A Historical Perspective on Light Infantry (Ft. Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute, 1987), 228.

¹⁸Experiences in Division Command. 1990, 5.

¹⁹Experiences in Division Command. 1991, 7.

²⁰McMichael, "The Nature of Light Infantry," 234.

²¹Charles E. Heller, The New Military Strategy And Its Impact On The Reserve Components (Carlisle Barracks, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, 1991), 15-31.

²²Ibid., 22-23.

²³George C. Wilson, "Shrinking of U.S. Military Forces Called Into Question," The Washington Post, 21 November 1990, A-14.

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